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| APPLICATION NO.                  | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|----------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/082,988                       | 02/26/2002  | Douglas Alan Miller  | 45568-00210         | 7053             |
| 25231                            | 7590        | 03/02/2004           | EXAMINER            |                  |
| MARSH, FISCHMANN & BREYFOGLE LLP |             |                      | NI, SUHAN           |                  |
| 3151 SOUTH VAUGHN WAY            |             |                      |                     |                  |
| SUITE 411                        |             |                      | ART UNIT            | PAPER NUMBER     |
| AURORA, CO 80014                 |             |                      | 2643                | 3                |

DATE MAILED: 03/02/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| <b>Office Action Summary</b> | Application No. | Applicant(s)  |
|------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
|                              | 10/082,988      | MILLER ET AL. |
| Examiner                     | Art Unit        |               |
| Suhan Ni                     | 2643            |               |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

1)  Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 February 2002.

2a)  This action is **FINAL**.                            2b)  This action is non-final.

3)  Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

4)  Claim(s) 1-47 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)  Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.

6)  Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are rejected.

7)  Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.

8)  Claim(s) 1-47 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

9)  The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)  The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a)  accepted or b)  objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)  The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

12)  Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a)  All b)  Some \* c)  None of:  
1.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3.  Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1)  Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2)  Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3)  Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_

4)  Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_ .

5)  Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6)  Other: \_\_\_\_ .

**DETAILED ACTION**

1. This communication is responsive to the application filed 02/26/2002.

***Election/Restriction***

2. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1-34, drawn to the structures/structural elements of a hearing aid;
- II. Claims 35-47, drawn to the structures/structural elements of a frequency equalization system.

3. Inventions I and II are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP ' 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because the invention I only drawn to a directional hearing aid. The subcombination has separate utility such as an acoustic system other than a hearing aid.

4. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons giving above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classifications, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

5. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Group II is not required for Group I. Restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

6. Applicants are advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement is traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

7. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a petition under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

*Conclusion*

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **Suhan Ni** whose telephone number is **(703)-308-9322**, and the number for fax machine is **(703)-305-9508**. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday from 9:00 am to 7:30 pm. If it is necessary, the examiner's supervisor, **Curtis Kuntz**, can be reached at **(703) 305-4708**.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the group receptionist whose telephone number is **(703) 305-3900**.

Suhan Ni  
Patent Examiner  
Art Unit 2643  
USPTO

  
SUHAN NI  
PATENT EXAMINER

February 26, 2004